

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2829

To establish a matching grant program to help State and local jurisdictions purchase armor vests for use by law enforcement departments.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 5, 1997

Mr. VISCLOSKY (for himself, Mr. LoBiondo, Mr. Abercrombie, Mr. Barrett of Wisconsin, Mr. Berry, Mr. Blagojevich, Mr. Boehlert, Mr. Bonior, Mr. Brown of Ohio, Mr. Buyer, Mr. Castle, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Costello, Mr. Coyne, Ms. Carson, Mr. Davis of Virginia, Mr. Dicks, Mr. Deutsch, Mrs. Emerson, Ms. Eshoo, Mr. Etheridge, Mr. Evans, Mr. Faleomavaega, Mr. Fazio of California, Mr. Filner, Mr. Fox of Pennsylvania, Mr. Frank of Massachusetts, Mr. Frost, Ms. Furse, Mr. Gejdenson, Mr. Gilman, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Gutierrez, Ms. Harman, Mr. Hastings of Florida, Mr. Hinchey, Mr. Holden, Mr. Horn, Mr. Jackson of Illinois, Mr. Johnson of Wisconsin, Mr. Kennedy of Rhode Island, Mr. Kildee, Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Kleczka, Mr. Klug, Mr. Lampson, Mr. Lantos, Mr. Lazio of New York, Mr. Lipinski, Ms. Lofgren, Mrs. Lowey, Mr. Manton, Mr. Martinez, Mr. Matsui, Mrs. McCarthy of New York, Mr. McIntyre, Ms. McKinney, Mr. McNulty, Mrs. Mink of Hawaii, Mr. Ney, Mr. Olver, Mr. Oxley, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Pappas, Mr. Ramstad, Mr. Reyes, Mr. Romero-Barceló, Mr. Rothman, Ms. Sanchez, Mr. Saxton, Mr. Sherman, Mr. Skeen, Ms. Slaughter, Mr. Stokes, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Stupak, Mrs. Tauscher, Mrs. Thurman, Mr. Towns, Mr. Traficant, Mr. Vento, Mr. Weller, Mr. Whitfield, Ms. Woolsey, and Mr. Yates) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish a matching grant program to help State and local jurisdictions purchase armor vests for use by law enforcement departments.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Bulletproof Vest Part-
5 nership Grant Act of 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) too many law enforcement officers die, while
9 protecting the public, as a result of gunshot wounds;

10 (2) according to studies, between 1985 and
11 1994, 709 law enforcement officers in the United
12 States were feloniously killed in the line of duty;

13 (3) more than 92 percent of such law enforce-
14 ment officers were killed by firearms;

15 (4) the number of law enforcement officers who
16 die as a result of gunshot wounds has declined sig-
17 nificantly since the introduction of modern bullet-
18 proof material;

19 (5) according to studies, between 1985 and
20 1994, bullet resistant materials helped save the lives
21 of more than 2,000 law enforcement officers in the
22 United States; and

23 (6) the number of law enforcement officers who
24 are killed in the line of duty would significantly de-

1 crease if every law enforcement officer in the United
2 States has access to an armor vest.

3 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to save
4 lives of law enforcement officers by helping State and local
5 law enforcement departments provide officers with armor
6 vests.

7 **SEC. 3. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

8 (a) GRANT AUTHORIZATION.—The Director of the
9 Bureau of Justice Assistance is authorized to make grants
10 to States or units of local government to purchase armor
11 vests for use by law enforcement officers.

12 (b) USES OF FUNDS.—Awards shall be distributed
13 directly to the State or unit of local government and shall
14 be used for the purchase of not more than 1 armor vest
15 for each police officer in a jurisdiction.

16 (c) PREFERENTIAL CONSIDERATION.—In awarding
17 grants under this Act, the Director of the Bureau of Jus-
18 tice Assistance may give preferential consideration, where
19 feasible, to applications from jurisdictions that—

20 (1) have the greatest need for armor vests
21 based on the percentage of officers in the depart-
22 ment who do not have access to a vest;

23 (2) have a mandatory wear policy that requires
24 on-duty officers to wear armor vests whenever fea-
25 sible; and

1 (3) have a violent crime rate at or above the na-
2 tional average as determined by the Federal Bureau
3 of Investigation.

4 (d) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—Unless all applications sub-
5 mitted by any State or unit of local government pursuant
6 to subsection (a) have been funded, each qualifying State
7 or unit of local government shall be allocated in each fiscal
8 year pursuant to subsection (a) not less than 0.25 percent
9 of the total amount appropriated in the fiscal year for
10 grants pursuant to that subsection.

11 (e) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—A qualifying State or unit
12 of local government may not receive more than 5 percent
13 of the total amount appropriated in each fiscal year for
14 grants pursuant to subsection (a).

15 (f) MATCHING FUNDS.—The portion of the costs of
16 a program provided by a grant under subsection (a) may
17 not exceed 50 percent, unless the Director of the Bureau
18 of Justice Assistance determines a case of fiscal hardship
19 and waives, wholly or in part, the requirement under this
20 subsection of a non-Federal contribution to the costs of
21 a program.

22 (g) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—At least half of the
23 funds awarded under this program shall be allocated to
24 units of local government with fewer than 100,000 resi-
25 dents.

1 **SEC. 4. APPLICATIONS.**

2 (a) STATE APPLICATIONS.—To request a grant
3 under this Act, the chief executive of a State shall submit
4 an application to the Director of the Bureau of Justice
5 Assistance, signed by the Attorney General of the State
6 requesting the grant, in such form and containing such
7 information as the Director may reasonably require.

8 (b) LOCAL APPLICATIONS.— To request a grant
9 under this Act, the chief executive of a unit of local gov-
10 ernment shall submit an application to the Director of the
11 Bureau of Justice Assistance, signed by the chief law en-
12 forcement officer of the unit of local government request-
13 ing the grant, in such form and containing such informa-
14 tion as the Director may reasonably require.

15 (c) RENEWAL.—A State or unit of local government
16 is eligible to receive a grant under this Act every 3 years.

17 (d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Bureau
19 of Justice Assistance shall promulgate regulations to im-
20 plement this section (including the information that must
21 be included and the requirements that the States and
22 units of local government must meet) in submitting the
23 applications required under this section.

24 **SEC. 5. PROHIBITION OF PRISON INMATE LABOR.**

25 Any State or unit of local government that receives
26 financial assistance provided using funds appropriated or

1 otherwise made available by this Act may not purchase
2 equipment or products manufactured using prison inmate
3 labor.

4 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

5 For purposes of this Act—

6 (1) The term “armor vest” means—

7 (A) body armor which has been tested
8 through the voluntary compliance testing pro-
9 gram operated by the National Law Enforce-
10 ment and Corrections Technology Center of the
11 National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and found
12 to comply with the requirements of NIJ Stand-
13 ard 0101.03, or any subsequent revision of such
14 standard; or

15 (B) body armor which exceeds the speci-
16 fications stated in subparagraph (A), and which
17 the law enforcement officer’s agency or depart-
18 ment permits the officer to wear on duty.

19 (2) The term “State” means each of the 50
20 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the
21 United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and
22 the Northern Mariana Islands.

23 (3) The term “qualifying State or unit of local
24 government” means any State or unit of local gov-
25 ernment which has submitted an application for a

1 grant, or in which an eligible entity has submitted
2 an application for a grant, which meets the require-
3 ments prescribed by the Director of the Bureau of
4 Justice Assistance and the conditions set out in sec-
5 tion 3.

6 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.**

7 There are authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000
8 for each fiscal year to carry out this program.

9 **SEC. 8. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.**

10 In the case of any equipment or products that may
11 be authorized to be purchased with financial assistance
12 provided using funds appropriated or otherwise made
13 available by this Act, it is the sense of the Congress that
14 entities receiving the assistance should, in expending the
15 assistance, purchase only American-made equipment and
16 products.

○